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AUTHOR Murk, Peter J.; Ross, Jovita M.
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of a review of course materials and teaching methods in the area of adult development and learning was to identify commonalities that existed in course titles, objectives, content areas, texts, required reading, resources used, course requirements, and instructional processes. Thirty-two course syllabi and 1 curriculum guide from 24 institutions of higher learning in 17 states and 2 Canadian provinces were reviewed. Some form of "The Adult Learner" or "Adult Learning" was used as the course title for 22 syllabi. Only two courses used the title "Adult Development and Learning." All 32 syllabi had some form of course description, but only 16 reported a clearly stated course purpose. Twenty-eight syllabi offered objectives and competencies to be mastered. Three major divisions of course content emerged from the course descriptions: emphasis on adult development concepts, theories and concepts of adult learning, and instructional methodologies. Twelve syllabi indicated a balanced combination of both theory and practice, with eight placing heavy emphasis on theory and seven emphasizing practice. Twelve courses had traditional academic assignments, 10 had assignments that blended theory and practice, and 6 had applied assignments. Twenty-eight different books were cited as texts, with the most frequently cited one being listed seven times. (A 28-page bibliography on adult learning and development is included with the report.) (CML)

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A REVIEW OF ADULT DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING COURSES TAUGHT AT TWENTY-FOUR NORTH AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES: A CONTENT ANALYSIS

by

Peter J. Murk, Ph.D.
Professor of Adult Education
The Center for Lifelong Education
Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana 47306

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Jovita M. Ross, Ed.D
Associate Professor
Adult Education Programs
Pennsylvania State University
220 Rackley Bldg.
University Park, PA 16802

For The Instructional Improvement Task Force

Of the Commission of Professors of Adult Education

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ABSTRACT SUMMARY

Adult Development and Learning

Thirty-two course syllabi and one curriculum guide dealing with adult development and learning were received from twenty-four institutions of higher learning. Some schools sent more than one syllabus and several courses were team taught and the syllabi developed by a team of instructors. Twenty-two syllabi featured a form of the title: The Adult Learner or Adult Learning. Only two courses had the title Adult Development and Learning. The titles of five courses focused on human or adult development while the remaining courses offered a variety of titles.

All thirty-two syllabi had some form of course description but only about half (16) reported a clearly stated course purpose as: to define describe, compare/contrast, analyze, know or become acquainted with...adult characteristics, theories of adult(hood) development(al) processes, learning theories and adult learn(ing). Seven syllabi had no clearly stated course purpose. The majority (28) of course syllabi offered objectives and competencies to be mastered which concentrated around eight major themes: the major characteristics of adults (as learners), the aging process, the adult development process and life stages, understanding the literature and current research studies regarding the major learning theories and theories of adult development of understanding the factors/variables and conditions of the teaching-learning process, and finally the application of the various theories in meaningful instructional plans. The remainder of the objectives dealt with learning style(s) or cultural and environmental influences on the adult and the learning process. Two syllabi had no learning objectives clearly stated.

Three major divisions of course content emerged from the course descriptions: emphasis on human/adult development concepts, theories and concepts of adult learning, and instructional methodologies. The topics and subtopics outlined in the syllabi addressed the eight major themes found in the objectives. Added to these were the principles of self-directed learning and the andragogical concepts of teaching and learning. Often the topics and subtopics, or his/her general understanding and use of strategies, reflected the instructor's philosophy of adult education. Elements related to this philosophy were often stated following the course purpose or aims.

Twelve syllabi reflected a balanced combination of both theory and practice. Eight placed a heavy emphasis on theory acquisition with some consideration given to practice while seven had an emphasis on practice, but with a theoretical base given through lectures, outside readings and other activities.

Analysis was made of the course assignments to determine the balance between traditional academic assignments and applied assignments. Twelve courses had academic assignments such as

papers, article or book reviews; ten courses had balanced assignments which blended research/theory and practice; and six courses had applied assignments. There was great variation in textbooks and required readings. Eight instructors mentioned no text required per se in their course syllabi and thirteen had supplemental readings suggested and/or assigned readings set aside in the campus library. Eight universities used instructor prepared materials/papers to supplement the course outline. However, when listed, a wide variety of textbooks were used.

Twenty-eight different books were cited as texts; the most frequently cited book was Cross' Adults as learners (1981) with seven syllabi listing it. Listed below are the books which were cited as texts in three different courses:

Brookfield, S.D. (1986). Understanding and facilitating adult learning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kidd, J.R. (1973). How adults learn. N.Y.: Associated Press.

Knowles, M.S. (1975). Self-directed learning: A guide for learners and teachers. N.Y.: Associated Press.

Knowles, M.S. (1984). The adult learner: The neglected species. Housten, TX.: Gulf Publishing.

Knox, A.B. (1977). Adult development and learning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Smith, R.M. (1982). Learning how to learn. Chicago: Follett.

Wlodkowski, R.J. (1985). Enhancing adult motivation to learn. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

There were five books which were listed on at least two syllabi and the remaining fifteen books were only cited once. A comprehensive bibliography has been compiled from the required and/or supplemental readings reported. Sources on this bibliography come from general education, psychology and sociology as well as adult education.

In considering the analysis of the syllabi for the adult development and learning course, there was some variation in assignment, resources, and textbooks. And there was some variation in content covered, reflecting in part the varying philosophical orientations of the instructors. There was, however, some consensus on the general content: characteristics of adults (as learners) and theories of adult development, adult learning and learning theories, and instructional methodologies and strategies.

Summarized from: Murk, P.J. and Ross, J.M. (1988). "A review of adult development and learning courses taught at twenty-four North American universities; A content analysis." Instructional improvement Task Force of the Commission of Professors of Adult Ed.

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A REVIEW OF ADULT DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING COURSES TAUGHT AT TWENTY-FOUR NORTH AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES: A CONTENT ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

The Commission of Professors of Adult Education (CPAE) concurred that the Instructional Improvement Task Force conduct a review of course syllabi and assemble a list of readings and bibliography used in selected core courses in the areas of Adult Development and Learning, Program Planning and Foundations/Introduction. An analysis of these syllabi and undertaken to review the common resources, references and methods of instruction.

A similar study was undertaken by the Instructional Improvement Task Force for the Commission in the late 1970's. However, since that study there have been many new Adult Education faculty added and the Adult Education literature content and scope has been expanded considerably.

In August, 1987 a letter was sent to each adult education graduate program requesting that syllabi from the three selected courses (Adult Development and Learning, Program Planning and Foundation/Introduction) be sent to the identified representatives of the project teams. However, given the limited response at that time, a second request was sent directly to the commission members in November, 1987 in order to get a broader representation. The request sought a copy of the course syllabus, additional

information regarding effective and/or innovative teaching methods and a copy of the bibliography used or reading list assigned to students.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The primary aim of the present study was to produce more current information and compile a summary of course materials and teaching methods in a more accessible form. The aim of the review was to identify in broad relief from the commonalities which existed in course titles, objectives, content areas, texts, required readings, resources used, course requirements and instructional processes in Adult Development and Learning courses.

The present study was also seen as a timely follow-up to the Adoption of Standards for graduate programs in adult education by the Commission of Professors of Adult Education in 1986. The Standards adopted by the CPAE designated specific courses as core courses. Adult Development and Learning, Program Planning and Foundations/Introduction were three of the courses designated and included in the project. The Instructional Improvement Task Force will continue a content analysis (of two other courses) at a later date.

A secondary aim, and perhaps the most important one, was to generate new information which would serve as guidelines and resources for new instructors and faculty in planning courses and assembling information and readings for those courses, and for providing additional information and resources for experienced faculty as they revise and update their current courses and add new readings to their required list and bibliographies.

A third aim of the study was to determine the extent to which qualitative differences in the courses existed which could be attributed to different academic units under whose auspices the

courses were offered. The Instructional Improvement Task Force plans to disseminate the content analysis report through ERIC and to keep the course syllabi and master lists of readings collected in a common location where they will be available for further study and review by new and experienced faculty in adult and continuing education.

FOCUS OF THE STUDY

A preliminary content analysis of course syllabi of Adult Development and Learning was begun in October, 1987. At that time only 19 course syllabi and lists of readings were sent for review by 21 faculty from eleven states and two Canadian provinces. The Instructional Improvement task force felt that there was an insufficient response. In November, 1987, a follow-up letter was sent to all members of the Commission of Professors of Adult Education (CPAE) reaffirming the mission and intent of the Instructional Improvement Task Force and urging greater participation.

The results produced a broader representation of ideas and course syllabi and bibliographies. Eleven categories were used as guidelines by the review team to insure consistency of content analysis. The categories consisted of 1) institutions--number and frequency of responses, 2) course titles--range and frequency of title, 3) course purposes--general purpose and/or overview, 4) competencies and/or specific course objectives, 5) course content--topics and subtopics studied, 6) course focus--theory and/or practice or a balance between both theory and practice, 7) course assignment--range and type of assignments a difference or balance

between "academic" or "applied" assignments, 8) textbooks-title and frequency used, 9) required readings and common used resources, 10) methods/techniques used and innovative practices cited in the courses and 11) a general summary and trends emerging from the data.

FINDINGS

The 11 categories cited in the methods section of the content analysis served as guidelines for the review process and facilitated cross comparison among the 31 courses syllabi and lists of readings received from 30 instructors/professors of Adult Development and Learning Courses (several of the courses were team taught and the syllabi developed by a team of instructors.) A rather extensive Curriculum Guide for FAculty entitled: Adult Development and Learning developed for faculty teaching in the Master of Science Degree Program at National College of Education was received and was included in the overall course content analysis. The 32 syllabi constitute a fairly wide cross section of colleges and universities which offer courses in Adult Development and/or Learning.

MAJOR THEMES

The major themes from the study concentrated on the five areas of study: 1) understanding the unique characteristics of adults: 2) identification of the learning needs and educational requirements of adult learners: 3) understanding of the processes of adult development and the relationships of the developmental processes to work life and educational needs of adults: 4) understanding of the major learning theories and how these theories

relate to the training, education, and management of adult learners; 5) understanding of the physical, psychological, social-emotional and mental changes associated with the aging process and the relationship of these changes to job and educational performance.

CONTENT ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

1. Institutions. Thirty instructors/faculty representing 17 states and two Canadian provinces responded to the survey. A total of 31 course syllabi and one curriculum guide representing 24 institutions of higher learning were received as follows:

INSTITUTIONS/STATE OR PROVINCE

Arizona State University, Tampa, AZ

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR

University of Arkansas, Little Rock, AR

Ball State University, Muncie, IN

East Carolina University, Greenville, NC

Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL

Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

National College of Education, Evanston, IL (Curriculum Guide for Faculty)

North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC (3 syllabi)

North Texas State University, Denton, TX

The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto, Ontario, Canada (syllabi)

Penn State University, University Park, PA

St. Joseph College, Hartford, CT (3 syllabi)

Texas A & M University, College Station, TX

University of Maine, Gorham, Maine

University of Missouri, Columbia, MO

University of Southern Maine, Portland, MA

University of Texas, Austin, TX (3 syllabi)

University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA (2 syllabi)

Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, Blacksburg, VA

George Washington University, Washington, DC

Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA

University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY

2a. Course Title(s). Of the 32 Adult Development and Learning Courses reviewed in the study 22 (68%) featured a form of the title: The Adult Learner or Adult Learning. Five courses (15%) focused on human or adult development. Other courses titles included: Successful Recareering, The Maturation Process, Self Guided Learning and Change, and Theory and Research on Adult Learning. Only two courses combined the title: Adult Development and Learning. Major themes of adulthood, the developmental process of aging and learning theories and their effects on aging, and adults' needs and involvement in the training and educational process emerged as prominent in course titles.

3. Purposes of the Course. All 32 syllabi had some form of course description but only about one half (16) reported a clearly stated course purpose: to define, describe, compare/contrast, analyze, know or become acquainted with...adult characteristics and distinctions, theories of adult(hood) development(al) processes, learning theories and adult learner(ing).

Several course syllabi descriptions, cited as the central purposes the use, practice, or implementation of adult learning experiences and development of adult teaching strategies and skills. Two syllabi asked the students to determine their own stages of development, or preferred learning strategies and theories. Two syllabi included objectives to review research for application and to identify "gaps" in research worthy of study. One unique syllabus, as its central purpose, asked the students to develop their own "self-directed learning" objectives and their own theory of adult curriculum.

The remaining seven course syllabi had no clearly stated course purpose.

4. Competencies and/or Course Objectives. This particular section offered the greatest variety of competencies to be mastered or course objectives to be attained. Often, each course syllabus had its own unique set of objectives which correlated with the major philosophy of the instructor or general course purpose stated. For example, one objective was cited as: to understand the self-directed learning process through/by developing one's own self-directed learning project. Another illustration was: to develop one's own learning theory (philosophy) through reviewing the literature and interacting with a variety of learning experiences and thereby developing a philosophy/theory of learning.

However, the majority (24) of course syllabi reviewed offered course objectives and competencies to be mastered which concentrated around the following eight major themes:

		Frequency
1.	To examine/list/understand the major characteristics of adults (as learners).	13
2.	To review/understand the adult development tasks and life stages.	12
3.	To identify and understand the effects of the aging (maturation) process as related to adult learners' objectives.	10
4.	To acquaint the learners with adult development and learning literature and research topics.	9
5.	To understand the factors/elements/variables and conditions of the teaching-learning process.	9
6.	To understand the major learning theories	8
7.	To understand/describe the major differences between youth and adult learners.	7
8.	To apply the learning concepts and theories by developing instructional plans, training and educational programs	7

The remainder of the course syllabi objectives centered on learning style(s) (3) or cultural and environmental influences on the adult and learning process (4). Finally, two syllabi had no learning objectives clearly stated.

5. Course Content(s). As reflected by the topics and sub-topics in the 32 syllabi, three major divisions emerged from the course descriptions: 1) Emphasis on Human/Adult Development Concepts, 2) Theories and Concepts of Adult Learning, and 3) Instructional methodologies/strategies. However, in the majority (18) of course syllabi these three divisions were blended into six

major themes or constructs. The following themes were most often mentioned as topics and subtopics:

1) General Understanding and Characteristics of Adults and Adult learners
2) Major Theories of Human/Adult Development & Aging
3) Major Learning Theories & Research
4) Self Directed Learning Concepts and Process
5) Andragogical Theories & Models
6) Instructional Studies including Assessment of Conditions for Learning, Evaluation Processes, Issues, Implications & Applications

The range and frequency with which the major themes were mentioned in the syllabi were as follows:

Topic & Subtopic	Frequency
1. General Understanding of the Adult Learner	
A) Uniqueness (characteristics, needs, values, descriptions and attitudes)	12
B) Motivation/Adult Behavior(s)	10
C) Differences Between Adult and Youthful Learners	8
D) Participation/Barriers to Learning	6
E) Psychological/Physiological Climate or Environment for Learners	5
2. Adult Development/Life Cycle	
A) Aging Process/Maturation Themes	10
B) Theories of Aging (Sociological, Biological, Economic, Psychological)	10
C) Adult Development Research	10

D)	Life Transition Themes	7
E)	Psychological Changes	7
F)	Developmental Phases/Stages	6
G)	Physiological Changes	6
H)	Social/Cultural Environmental Changes	5
I)	Personality & Identity	5
J)	Intellectual Changes	4
K)	Gender Differences	3
L)	Moral/Ethical Changes	3

3. Major Learning Theories Mentioned

A)	Learning How to Learn or General Learning Environment	12
B)	Adult Learning Research	12
C)	Learning Styles/Brain Research and Learning Style Inventories	9
D)	The Learning Process perception, cognition, memory, recall and recognition	9
E)	Phenomenologicalism (gestalt theory, field theory, and cognitive development)	5
F)	Behaviorism (operant conditioning, behavior modification and contingency management	4

4. Self Directed Learning

A)	Physical Aspects, Psychological Climate, General understanding and research	10

6. Instructional Strategies/Methodologies for Teaching/ Training Adult Learners

A)	Issues, Implications and Applications	11

B)	Principles/Conditions for Learning	7
C)	Evaluation Techniques Mentioned	5
D)	Factors/Variables in the Teaching-Learning Process	4
E)	Facilitator Roles/Responsibilities	4
F)	Assessment Strategies	3

Other topics and subtopics and a general reading list expanding the topic were often included in the syllabi. Generally, the topics and subtopics followed an outline form in a majority of the courses (18) and several (6) course descriptions had sub-themes which were very related to the six major themes as described above.

Often, the topics and subtopics, or the general understanding and use of strategies reflected the instructor's philosophy of adult education. Elements related to this philosophy were often stated following the course purpose or aims.

7) Course Focus (theory, practice or both theory and practice)

As the course syllabi differed primarily in the name of the course, general course purpose and corresponding objectives and aims, a system on five point rating scale was developed to analyze the major focus or thrust of the course. At one end of the scale, the numbers 1 and 2 are used to indicate either all theory or mostly theory with little practice. The number 3 indicates a balance between theory and practice, the number 4 indicates mostly practice with little theory, and 5 indicates practice without a theoretical base.

1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5

theory both practice

Course Focus Analysis	Frequency N=32
1. All theory based courses with little or no practice mentioned per se in the syllabi	3
2. Heavy emphasis on theory acquisition; some consideration given to practice through readings, novel analysis and character development, some student led sessions or some practice through a project, but little practice discussed	8
3. Balanced combination of both theory and practice as illustrated through in-class projects, class presentations, class exercises, interviewing adult learners, keeping learning logs and journals. Additional examples of the balance used lectures, labs and files work and class planning activities	12
4. Emphasis on practice, but with a theoretical base given through lectures, outside readings, case work and class discussions and projects	7
5. Mostly practice without a discernible theoretical base	2

7. Assignments. Three broad categories of assignments were evident in the review of the 32 syllabi: 1) "academic" assignments typical of many traditional graduate courses in psychology and adult education and 2) "applied" assignments related to the actual practice of Adult Development and Learning Courses. The third category was a good balance between research and theoretical foundation with practical applications given. The most frequently reported assignments were listed as follows:

	Frequency
I. "Academic" Assignments (12)	
Assigned readings from bibliographies provided or outside readings suggested	25
Final exam and/or midterm assessment and quizzes given	8
A major term paper assigned	7

	Articles and book reviews/critiqued	6
	Review of the Literature/Research	4
II.	Balanced Assignments (10)	
	(Blend of research/theory and practice)	
	Class discussion (Instructor and/or student led)	9
	Short papers/essays	6
	Mini/Major class projects	
	(Blending theory and practice)	5
	Oral presentations on literature made in class	4
	Self directed learning units	
	(Applying theory to practice)	4
	Review biographies/novels	2
	Write unit/instructional plans	2
	Design workshops	2
	Series of workshops (Blending theory and practice)	1
III.	"Applied" Assignments (6)	
	Class projects/term projects	8
	Case histories/case studies of learners	4
	Interviewing subjects	3
	Class/Small group presentations	3
	Surveys/questionnaires used	3
	Personal journal/log of activities kept	2
IV.	No assignment listed per se in the course syllabus	4

The fourth category was revealing in that no written assignments was evident from the course syllabi per se. However, a bibliography and series of readings were included and perhaps assignments were then given by the instructor during a class

activity.

8. Required Textbooks - Title and Frequency. After a careful review of the course syllabi, several factors emerged: Eight instructors (23%) mentioned no text required per se in their course syllabus. Thirteen (40%) had supplemental readings suggested and had assigned readings and references set aside in the college (university) libraries. Eight universities (25%) used instructor prepared materials/papers to supplement the course outline.

However, when required course texts were mentioned as in the course syllabi, the following texts were identified:

	Frequency
Cross, K.P. (1981) Adults as learners. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass	7
Brookfield, S.D. (1986) Understanding and facilitating adult learning. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass	3
Kidd, J.R. Jr. (1973) How adults learn. New York, NY: Associated Press	3
Knowles, M.S. (1975) Self-directed learning: A guide for learners and teachers. New York, NY: Associated Press	3
Knowles, M.S. (1984) (3rd Ed.) The adult learner: A neglected species. Houston, TX: Gulf	3
Knox, A.B. (1977) Adult development and learning. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass	3
Smith, R.M. (1982) Learning how to learn. Chicago, IL: Follett (Prentice/Hall)	3
Wlodkowski, R.J. (1985) Enhancing adult motivation to learn. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass	3
Bigge, M.L. (1983) Learning theories for adults. New York, NY: Harper & Row	2
Long, H.B. (1983) Adult learning. New York, NY: Cambridge (Prentice/Hall)	2
Merriam, S. (1983) Themes of adulthood through	

literature.
New York, NY: Teachers College Press 2

Merriam, S. (1984) Adult development: Implications for adult education. (Info Series #282) Columbus, OH: ERIC 2

Schaie, K.W. & Willis, S.L. (1986) Adult development and aging. (2nd Ed.) Boston, MA: Little Brown & Company 2

Allman, L. & Jaffe, P. (1982) Readings in adult psychology. New York, NY: Harper & Row 1

Aslanian, C. & Bricknell, H.M. (1980) Americans in transition. New York, NY: The College Board 1

Botwink, J. (1984) Aging and Behavior. (3rd Ed.) New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company 1

Brundage, D.H. & Mackeracher, D. (1980) Adult learning principles and their application to program planning. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education 1

Houle, C.O. (1980) Continuing learning in the professions. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass 1

Kegan, R. (1982) The evolving self. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1

Knowles, M.S. (1980) The modern practice of adult education. (2nd Ed.) New York, NY: Association Press 1

Krupp, J.A. (1981) Adult development: Implications for staff development. Manchester, Conn.: Adult Development Learning 1

Laird, D. (1976) Approaches to training and development. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley 1

Lasher, H.M. & Moore J. & Simpson, E.L. (Eds), Adult development and approaches to learning. Washington, DC: National Institute of Education 1

Lefrancois, G.R. (1985) Psychology for teaching. (5th Ed.) San francisco, CA: Wadsworth 1

Oxford, R. (1983) Successful recareering. Lincoln, NB: Media Productions 1

Schon, D. (1987) Educating the reflective practioner. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass 1

Tough, A. (1979) The Adult's learning projects: A fresh approach to theory and practice in adult learning. Austin, TX: Learning Concepts 1

Tough, A. (1982) International changes: A fresh approach to helping people change. Chicago, IL: Follett/Prentice Hall 1

9. Required Readings, Resources and Bibliographies. There is considerable variability on the choices of required or recommended course texts. Again, generally, the texts follow the instructor's philosophy, course focus and general perspective toward adult development and learning. A complete list of readings and a general bibliography is provided at the end of the content analysis.

10. Methods/Techniques Share in Teaching. The most common class strategies/activities suggested in the course syllabi reviewed were aimed at assisting students: (a) to gain a good grasp of the topics, including accurate knowledge and evidence of critical thinking and evaluation, (b) to acquire the ability to analyze and synthesize relevant principles, theory and research in adult development and learning and content, and (c) to apply appropriate principles to situations related to practice.

Common Methods/Techniques Used	Frequency
1. Long papers--written term papers Average length 10-15 pages	11
2. Class attendance and participation	10
3. Midterm/final examinations written	10
4. Written essays (short papers)	8
5. Group discussions (instructor and student led)	5
6. Groups/team projects Research, oral presentations, journal critiques	5

7. Journal article critiques 4

Some instructors used other strategies in their teaching/learning methodologies. These techniques included:

		Frequency
1.	Self directed learning plans	5
2.	Keeping personal journals, weekly logs	4
3.	Interviews by students of adult/senior learners	4
4.	Self assessment/evaluation strategies	3
5.	Learning Contracts	2

In addition there were several quite unique or imaginative teaching/learning activities reported from the course syllabi. These techniques included:

		Frequency
1.	Creative/artistic projects	3
2.	Design a training unit module	2
3.	A structured student feedback method using instructor prepared instruments	2
4.	Computer assisted instruction	1
5.	Reading/reviewing five novels for insights about adult development and learning	1
6.	A class prepared instructional guide and annotated bibliography of readings for adult learning experiences	1

11. Evaluation Strategies Used. As reported by the instructors from their course syllabi, many adult educators believed that examinations should be an integral part of the learning experience. Many instructors used examinations; but variations on the theme included either in class examinations or take home tests. The kinds of examinations used included written

essay examinations and multiple choice tests. Some instructors requested that the students match philosophies or concepts with authors or authorities. Some instructors asked for definitions of important learning terms or theories. Some instructors used examination questions based on doctoral comprehensive examination topics. Many of the examinations were graded by the instructors; however, some were ungraded.

Some instructors felt that class participation both in terms of quantity and quality--was important to the assessment process. Oral reports given by students in class was another means of assessment. The students could give either individual or group reports and then the reports were critiqued by the instructor, by student peers and/or by themselves.

Writing term papers was an additional means of assessing knowledge and learning by the instructors surveyed. However, the papers were variable in nature, from an analysis, critique and summary of research to a short essay on an assigned topic related to the discussion. These papers were then critiqued by the instructor, by student peers or by the individual.

All instructors had some means of assessment of knowledge and student acquired competencies.

12. General Summary and Analysis. In the previous sections of the content analysis of the 32 course syllabi submitted by 30 instructors/professors of adult development and learning courses representing 14 major colleges and universities of North American certain trends and issues emerged from the content data analysis.

The content analysis began with the identification of the

major institutions which submitted syllabi for review. The institutions were identified as to geographic location and the number submissions represented a cross section of adult development and learning courses from 24 colleges representing 17 states and tow Canadian Provinces.

The course titles were identified and described in detail. Sixty-eight percent (68%) featured a form or variation of the title: Adult Development and Learning and five (15%) courses focused on human or adult development. The remaining courses (17%) suggested adult learning instructional themes. As the titles reflected the content of the courses, the major themes of: Adulthood, the developmental task/process of aging, learning theories. and their effects of the aging process and the needs and involvement of adult learners, in the training and/or instructional educational process emerged from the content analysis.

The course purposes were described in the review and only about half (16) of the instructors reported a clearly stated course purpose such as: to define, describe, compare/contrast, analyze, adult development and learning theories and processes for the adult learning practices and the instructional plans for the training/teaching of adult learners. Seven course syllabi had no clearly stated course purpose, per se.

Eight major themes and their frequencies were reported from the content analysis process. The major themes centered around the major characteristics of adults (as learners), the aging process, the adult developmental process and life stages, understanding the literature and current research studies regarding

the major learning theories and of adult development, and understanding the factors/variables and conditions of the teaching-learning process and finally the application of the various theories in meaningful instructional plans and education/ training programs.

The same eight adult development and learning themes emerged from the course content section analysis, with the addition of the principles of self-directed learning content and process and the andragogical concepts of teaching and learning methods for adult learners.

As far as the direction(s) of the course foci, there appeared to be an even balance between the adult development and learning theories and their applied practices as reflected through some of the activities which included class presentations, projects, interviewing adult learners, participants keeping personal journals of their learning, and class discussions of important principles and concepts of adult development and learning theories.

In the analysis of class assignments, three major themes or categories emerged from the content analysis process. The first major category centered on "academic" assignments as reflected by the writing of term papers, short essays, journal articles reviews and midterm and final examinations. The second category was a blend of theory and practice as illustrated by adult learner interviews, the writing of instructional plans, class discussions, and oral presentations of findings and activities reflecting a mastery of the theoretical concepts of adult development and learning theories. The third and final category illustrated the

"applied" side through case studies and case histories of adult learners, class/team projects, lab experiments, and the keeping of personal journals and logs of learning and activities.

Analysis of required textbooks revealed that 8 instructors/professors mentioned no text required for their courses: 13 instructors used supplemental readings suggested and had assigned books and references set aside in their own college/university libraries. Eight professors had instructor prepared materials/papers to supplement the course outline of topics studied. When the required course texts were mentioned the following authors and their recognized texts were cited most frequently: Drs. K. Patricia Cross, Stephen Brookfield, Robey Kidd, Malcolm Knowles, Alan B. Knox, Robert M. Smith, and R. J. Wlodkowski.

The most common class strategies/activities used by the instructors were both "academic" and "applied" strategies in order for the participants - both graduate and undergraduate - to grasp the concepts of adult development and learning theories, to apply the principles from the research and the body of literature. Critical thinking skills were stressed and concept formation was emphasized as reflected by the topics and subtopics studied and class activities used by the instructors. Reading, writing, and applied methods were utilized by the instructors.

CONCLUSIONS

Thirty instructors from 24 colleges and universities from North America participated in the study through the review of their course syllabi content analysis. While this was a cross section of Adult Development and Learning courses taught at universities

it was a convenience rather than a random sample, so does not necessarily represent the total population. Every instructor brings his/her own personal philosophy of adult development and learning into a classroom, thus this review can serve only as a guide for further study and greater development. The field of adult development and learning is maturing and it is recommended that a similar study be replicated in five years or so in order to gain a better perspective of the newer writings and greater research to add to the field of adult Development and Learning.

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Compiled by Jovita Martin Ross, Asst.Prof.Penn State U. from syllabi collected from members of Comm. of Prof. Adult Ed. '88